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Chapter 1 Newsletter

Vol. 5 No. 1 February 1988

Reauthorization

Senate Bill 373 has been reported out by the full Senate Committee. The bill, "The Robert T. Stafford Elementary and Secondary Education Improvement Act of 1987," is very similar to HR5, the bill passed by the house this fall to reauthorize ECIA programs. SB373 does include the two new programs called Even Start and School Dropout Problems which were included in HR5.

There are minor differences between HR5 and SB373 because each body attempted to put its stamp on the legislation. A conference between the House and Senate should take place shortly after the first of the year. We should have a final bill by March of 1988.

When reviewing the new proposed legislation, HR5 and SB373, one major emphasis was noticed. Each bill makes this point in the "Statement of Purpose," Section 1001, Declaration of Policy and Statement of Purpose.

(b) STATEMENT OF PURPOSE—The purpose of assistance under this chapter is to improve the education opportunities of educationally deprived children ***by helping such children succeed in the regular program of the local educational agency, attain grade-level proficiency, and improve achievement in basic and more advanced skills.*** *These purposes shall be accomplished through such means as supplemental education programs, schoolwide programs, and the increased involvement of parents in their children's education.*

The important item within this statement is set in bold print. To many of us this means that the ECIA Chapter 1 programs of the future must be designed in coordination and cooperation with the regular basic school district program. We in Chapter 1 will be required to demonstrate how the Chapter 1 program is in concert with the district program.

Chapter 1 will no longer be a program to be shunted off to the closet or stage, but it must become an integral part of the total program. However, this new language extends a challenge to ECIA Chapter 1 program personnel to put forth that extra effort to ensure that cooperation and coordination between programs work for better programs for children. Exciting times are ahead for Chapter 1, and it is hoped that all of you look forward to the challenge of the future.

Future issues of this newsletter will contain outlines or highlighted changes in the forthcoming final legislation. If you have questions or ideas that need to be discussed, please let us know.

McCallum to Lead State Coordinators

Jay McCallum, Director of Chapters 1 & 2 at the Office of Public Instruction, was elected President-Elect of the National Association of State Coordinators of ECIA Chapter 1. Jay will assume office during the 1988-89 school year and will assume his duties at the National State Coordinators Conference in Washington, D.C. in the fall of 1988.

This is the first time that a state coordinator from the Western United States has been elected to lead the National Association of State Coordinators.

Jay has worked at the Office of Public Instruction since 1973. He worked as a program specialist with ESEA Title I (now Chapter 1) until January 1977 when he became manager/director of the Title I/Chapter 1 program.

During the 1988-89 school year, the states will have an opportunity to implement the new ECIA Chapter 1 legislation. This legislation will emphasize coordination and cooperation between regular education and compensatory education. It will be a requirement that each local school district demonstrate that the Chapter 1 program supports the regular reading, math and language arts curriculum of the local school district. With the new emphasis, Jay looks forward to working with the state and national Chapter 1 staffs on this new program direction.

Children's Literature in the Reading Program

You can't teach reading comprehension if you don't have a good story to work with.

Since comprehension is shaped by the reader's schema (the knowledge already stored in memory about what should be), it stands to reason that when new material conforms to expectations, it is easier to understand. When the new information is combined with prior knowledge, we call it comprehension. Comprehending a story is like completing a puzzle—all of the information is used; it fits together without forcing. Good literature contains well-crafted elements which create a coherent picture and which support logical inferences. Good stories provide reading teachers with the right materials to teach reading comprehension. Students remember and are quick to recall good literature; they store it in their memories and draw upon it to comprehend new information.

Becoming a Nation of Readers, Anderson et al. (1985), shows that students who read most read best. Students need a lot of practice to become skilled readers. The old saying "practice makes perfect" applies to reading as much as it does to anything else. Learning to read is like learning to play the piano; the more we practice, the better we become.

Researchers show that children take over the language they hear and read and use it as part of their own (Cazden, 1972, Chomsky, 1972).

A literature program provides strong language models. Hearing and reading good stories help to develop vocabulary, sharpen a sensitivity to language, and fine tune a sense of writing style.

The only source of knowledge sufficiently rich and reliable for learning about written language is the writing already done by others. We learn to write by reading what others have written; we enrich our repertoire of ways to say things by reading what others have said.

Literature in a reading program does more than merely attract willing readers. Literature educates the imagination, provides language models, and molds the intellect. The heritage of humankind lies in books; we endow students with the key to their legacy when we teach them to read.

References

Anderson, R.C. *Becoming a Nation of Readers.* Urbana-Champaign: U.S. Dept. of Education, 1985.

Cazden, Courtney. *Child Language and Education.* New York: Holt, 1972.

Chomsky, Carol. Stages in language development and reading exposure. *Harvard Educational Review,* 1972, 1-33.

BULLETIN

After the article in this newsletter concerning reauthorization was written, SB373 was passed by the full Senate and is now in the conference stage. This bill should be on the President's desk shortly after the first of the year.

Federal Reviews

Montana will receive two ECIA Chapter 1 federal reviews during the 1987-88 school year. The reviews will cover the migrant Chapter 1 program and the neglected or delinquent and regular local school district programs.

The regular ECIA Chapter 1 program, Local Private Neglected or Delinquent program and State Agency Neglected or Delinquent program review will take place the week of May 23-27, 1988. The review will be conducted at the school district level and at the state office. At least four program specialists from the United States Department of Education (USDE) will be in Montana during that week. They will visit with local teachers, administrators, parents, students and Office of Public Instruction staff while in Montana.

The review is to ascertain whether the Office of Public Instruction is correctly administering the program and whether local school districts are implementing the statute as designed by Congress. The USDE program specialists will review the following program areas: needs assessment, student selection, program design, program operation, evaluation, comparability, financial accounting and other program concerns.

The Office of Public Instruction will receive a review letter from USDE approximately one month after the review. USDE will identify in the review letter the corrective actions that must be taken and audit exceptions that must be addressed. When we are notified which school districts will be reviewed, we will let each of you know the dates and times of the review.

The migrant program will be reviewed by USDE in June 1988. Only active program sites will be visited. They include Sidney, Glendive, Hysham, Hardin, Billings, Fromberg and the Flathead Valley. In addition to the above-noted program areas, they will review our Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS) procedures. The MSRTS is a nationwide computerized communications network designed to transfer the records of migrant students as they move from school to school.

We hope this review by the USDE will be a learning process for all involved with the ECIA Chapter 1 program. It is our feeling that the USDE will learn from Montana as we will learn from them.

Jay McCallum, 444-3695: Chapters 1 and 2 Director

Angela Branz-Spall, 444-2423: Chapter 1 Migrant Program Specialist

Nancy Coopersmith, 444-4420: Chapter 1 Program Specialist

John Ericksen, 444-5443: Chapter 1 Program Specialist

Patricia Pickett, 444-3083: Chapter 1 Program Specialist

Collette LeFebvre, 444-2509: Chapter 1 Migrant and Chapter 2 Administrative Assistant

Gwen Smith, 444-5660: Chapter 1 Administrative Assistant

National Norms Comparisons

Since early in the last decade, there have been countless assertions that pupil achievement has declined across the nation. A variety of possible causes have been cited—too much television, changing family structure, erosion of educational standards, etc. While some of these causes have not affected pupil achievement, others have had an impact.

Educators across the country have assessed instructional programs within their own districts and have made changes where needs were evident. Some of these changes were difficult and some were, perhaps, ineffective. The result of these changes when aggregated nationally, however, is that national achievement levels have increased significantly since the 1977-78 school year.

Pupil, school and district percentile rank averages on recently normed tests are likely to be lower than were reported on previous editions of the same test. Does this mean that pupils receiving lower scores are doing less well now than before? No! The scores are lower because they are based on comparisons with a stronger, more current norms base. In one example, a sixth-grader who took the same test once was compared against three different norms groups—1977, 1981 and 1984. The national percentile ranks were, respectively, 50, 44 and 41. The student scored the highest when compared to the lowest standard (1977). She scored the lowest when compared to the highest standard (1984).

Lower scores reflect improvement in our nation's education. It is better to use scores on the new tests as new benchmarks against which to compare future instructional effectiveness than to use these scores to compare with those in previous years.

What Works: Instructional Practices from Chapter 1 Classrooms

Sequencing

I have found that colored comic strips from the Sunday newspaper section are helpful in assisting students who have difficulty in establishing sequential events as they relate to reading a story. A cartoon strip is cut from the newspaper, glued onto tag board for support, numbered or lettered on the back (numerically or alphabetically), laminated, and then cut apart. The mixed-up cartoon is presented to the student in an envelope. The student reads what is printed and puts the cartoon into the proper sequence. I have found that Peanuts, Garfield and Marvin comic strips work very well with elementary students.

Julie Ann Flynn
Fairview Elementary School
Fairview, Montana

What Works?
Eamon Adventures: A Public Domain Writing Software

Adventure! The very word is exciting. Even reading about adventures is thrilling. Now, you can participate in adventures without leaving town! Eamon Adventures fight battles, escape from danger, and win fortunes. Along the way, problems must be solved and decisions made. Of course, that requires creativity, vocabulary, comprehension, organization, recognizing details, main ideas and other reading skills. Even spelling becomes important because the computer simply cannot understand strange spellings. Adventurers get so fired up they use every available minute on the computer.

Eamon Adventures are stories in which the reader actually becomes involved. Instead of passively accepting what the author writes, the adventurers shape and explore imaginary worlds. As they progress through adventures, the characters not only retain all their treasures, but increase in skills!

Eamon Adventures are public domain! Bring at least 10 disks to the 1988 Chapter 1 Fall Conference so you can get the starter set from Starshine.

Starshine
Chapter 1 Teacher
Helena Middle School

Report on Fall Conference

The Montana ECIA Chapter 1 Fall Conference was held September 9-11, 1987, at the Ramada Inn in Billings. The conference was well attended. Over 530 Montana educators attended and 90 percent of the Chapter 1 projects were represented.

Ed Argenbright, Superintendent of Public Instruction, opened the conference with greetings and best wishes for the school year. He discussed the importance of Chapter 1 programs for Montana's at-risk youth.

Linda Thompson, Senior Research Associate from Region 2 Chapter 1 Technical Assistance Center in Indianapolis, Indiana, was the keynote speaker. Her address, ''Prospectives for a New Year: From the Outside Looking In,'' was informative and inspiring. Linda served as an Office of Public Instruction Chapter 1 specialist for six years before she moved to the TAC Center.

Thirty-two sessions were offered during the conference. Chapter 1 educators presented their area of expertise to others with common interests. The evaluation results confirmed that Montana's Chapter 1 educators are knowledgeable about educational concerns and capable of communicating techniques and programs to other educators.

The planning has begun for next year's fall conference. It will be held at the Billings Sheraton Hotel, September 28-30, 1988. Proposals are included with this newsletter. If you are interested in presenting a session, complete the proposal form. The deadline for proposals will be April 15, 1988. If you have questions, call Pat Pickett, 444-3083.

MEPIC

At the annual Chapter 1 Fall Conference held in Billings in September, many teachers and administrators expressed an interest in learning more about the Montana Education Program Improvement Center (MEPIC).

Acquired in 1986 through an interstate cooperation grant from California's Chapter 1 Migrant Program, the MEPIC features a variety of curricular improvement ideas and lesson plans. Content areas include reading, math, science, health education, early childhood programs, affective education, gifted education, multicultural issues and social sciences.

The Center is divided into two distinct areas: Federal Projects (FPs) and Lesson Plans. The FPs are binders which contain nationally or state validated successful programs in the content areas mentioned. These binders contain complete program information including who to contact to find out more about a certain project, cost of the project and scope and sequence. The binders are permanently housed in the Office of Public Instruction Chapter 1 resource area in Helena and are available for viewing Monday-Friday, 8-5 p.m.

What happens if you are interested in finding out more about a particular curricular program, but you cannot get to Helena? Simply call 444-2509 or send your written request stating which federal program you are interested in to: MEPIC, Office of Public Instruction, State Capitol, Helena, MT 59620. Collette LeFebvre, Administrative Assistant, will send you an informational brochure about that particular program by return mail.

If you are not sure which program your school might be interested in, you can contact any of the curriculum specialists at the Office of Public Instruction including Ron Lukenbill, National Diffusion Network Coordinator at 444-2080, Angela Branz-Spall, 444-2423, or your Chapter 1 project specialist.

The other popular feature of MEPIC is the Lesson Plan center. For a nominal fee, which covers duplication and mailing costs, teachers can obtain lesson plan packets in a variety of content areas. These packets were prepared by teachers for actual classroom use and can save countless hours in preparation time.

We have enclosed with the newsletter a lesson plan listing along with a federal projects list for your use. Please share these listings with your school staff. We are hoping that the MEPIC will be one way our office can assist school district personnel in the ongoing search for educational programs and ideas that work.

NOTICE

During the ECIA Chapter 1 fall workshop, many of you asked if our office could reproduce the essay Mr. Argenbright used in his address in Billings. The essay was titled, "All I Ever Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten" by Robert Fulghum. Random House, Inc., has denied the request to reprint this essay because Mr. Fulghum will be publishing a collection of essays. This essay will be included and will also serve as the title of the book.

NWREL Test Center

The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL), Portland, Oregon, has developed a collection of assessment tools (both student outcomes and process measures), testing resources, item banks and curriculum scope and sequences. There are over 800 titles in the Test Center.

Test Center staff will loan specimen sets of tests on a specific topic as well as bibliographies and reviewing information. Each year a topical area is selected for emphasis, and the Test Center publishes guides to assessing that topical area. Currently these guides exist for: higher order thinking skills, school and classroom climate, and writing skills. Anyone who borrows materials from the Test Center is asked to respect copyright law and to protect the validity of test items by not copying them or making them available to unauthorized users.

The following are some of the broad topical areas included in the Test Center collection:

General
- Basic Skills
- Study Skills
- Higher Order Thinking

Educational Environment
- Administrator Evaluation
- Curriculum Evaluation
- Instruction
- Parent Participation

Affective Behavior
- Student Attitudes
- Self Concept

Communication
- Reading
- Language Arts
- Listening Comprehension
- Speech Communication
- Writing Evaluation
- English Literature
- Language Proficiency

Mathematics
- Algebra
- Geometry
- Computer Science

Natural Sciences
- Earth Science
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics

Social Sciences
- Social Studies
- Geography
- History

The only cost to Montana Chapter 1 educators who borrow from the Test Center is the postage to return the materials to the center. The Test Center is located at NWREL, 101 S.W. Main Street, Suite 500, Portland, Oregon 97204. You may telephone the center at 1-800-547-6339.